

The next morning I went under the sodium pentothal in an unusual pre-operative position: hands locked across my mouth in a death grip.

The Bird Man of Long Beach

He is a sober gentleman whose only extravagance is A gaudy war surplus parachute. When the wind is Right he buckles himself into the gear and flies Alone. A pegged rope retains him as he angles up Like a kite. Aloft he laughs aloud.

On halcyon days he goes out anyway, standing in His harness, the loftless chute a ton of down. He Looks up at the sky longingly, pulls from his beer, Looks again. Then he waits, bandy-legged, plumeless.

He is praying for a mistral, a hot whopping gut-snapper Of a gale to catapult him into the blue, to carry him Up and out til the inessential land melts away and Sublunary is only the condition of the moment.

Success

Ever since I was a kid, my parents have always been after me to get a head. Well, I tried off

and on for years, but something always got in the way. Even in college I just couldn't do

it. Now, though, everything has turned out all right. I've done it. It's a woman's

head, but I guess that doesn't make any difference. I did a rough job hacking it

off, too, because I was scared but all that's over now. I hope Mom and Dad are proud.